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Special Agent in Charge

the

Enlisted Special Agent

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The information detailed below relates one example of the important role played by the AFOSI enlisted Special Agent. The narrative serves to relay, not an example of anything extraordinary, but a typical example of the type of contributions made by AFOSI enlisted Special Agents. These contributions serve not only the needs of the organization, but the greater needs of the US Air Force. Before we began, it might be helpful to provide a very brief description of the AFOSI organizational structure, and the role of the Special Agent in Charge (SAC) in the organization.

The Air Force Office of Special Investigations (AFOSI) is organized with a headquarters element, responsible for staff functions within the command, located at Bolling Air Force Base, Washington D.C.. The second element in the organization are 7 region headquarters structured along Air Force Major Command Lines. Each of the 7 region headquarters offices are located on host Air Force Major Command headquarters bases. As examples, AFOSI 1st Field Investigations Region is responsible for providing investigative, counterintelligence, and other specialized support to the Air Force Material Command (AFMC), at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base (WPAFB), Ohio. AFOSI 2nd Field Investigations Region is responsible for providing the same types of support to the Air Combat Command, at Langley Air Force Base, Virginia.. The basic investigative element of the organization is the detachment under the region headquarters element. The detachment supports the Air Force major command at individual major command

bases. AFOSI Detachment 101, under Region 1, provides investigative, counterintelligence, and other specialized support to AFMC units on WPAFB, Ohio.

The position of SAC is the only position within AFOSI where the enlisted Special Agent has the opportunity to serve in a “command” position. AFOSI Detachment 103, at Newark Air Force Base, Ohio is the only SAC position within AFOSI Region 1. In the recent past, a single SAC position within a region was typical throughout the command. However, some region commanders do not feel enlisted special agents should command detachments, with the option of officer Special Agents serving as “Commanders” in the detachments. During the last few years, a number of SAC positions have reverted back to officer positions. As an example, a SAC commanded the AFOSI detachment at Hurlburt Field, Florida, for three years. In a command wide competition, the detachment was selected as the small detachment of the year for an unprecedented two years straight. However, following a region commander change, the SAC, a Senior Master Sergeant, was replaced by a Major as the detachment commander.

During operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, AFOSI elements attached to Central Command were structured essentially the same. Immediately following the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, until the end of the conflict, eventual Iraqi surrender, and redeployment (August 1990 until March 1991), AFOSI District 73 (Provisional), Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, was the deployed AFOSI headquarters element attached to Central Command. AFOSI Region 73 provided Tactical Counterintelligence Collections, Reports, and Assessments; Air Base Survivability Assessments; Intelligence Information Reports; Counterintelligence Collection Information Reports; Protective Service Assessments and Operations; and reactive criminal and fraud investigative support to deployed commanders attached to Central Command during the conflict.

Under AFOSI District 73, AFOSI Detachment 7308 (Provisional) was attached to the 33rd Tactical Fighter Wing (33 TFW) (Provisional), deployed to King Faisal Air Base, Tabuk, Saudi Arabia. (1:43). AFOSI Detachment 7308 was the only AFOSI unit in the theater, commanded by an enlisted Special Agent in Charge, throughout both Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

This is the story of AFOSI Detachment 7308 and its support to the 33 TFW. The 33 TFW was credited with the first, second, and third air to air kills of the war; the highest number of air to air kills of the war; the only wing commander to record an air to air kill; and the most pilots recording multiple air to air kills.

The Saudi Arabian city of Tabuk is located in the Northwestern mountain region of the Kingdom, on the Western edge of the great desert. It's located approximately 60 kilometers East of the Red Sea, approximately 60 kilometers Southeast of the Gulf of Acaba and directly South of the Jordanian border. The city is most known as the cite used for the filming of the "train station" scene in the movie, "Lawrence of Arabia." The city is also known for the existence of one of the last remaining Turkish Forts in the Kingdom. The fort was build during the period of Ottoman Turk rule (prior to British occupation and establishment of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia). Because of its close proximity to the Kingdom of Jordan and the State of Israel (and following the ouster of Palestinian populations from both countries), the Palestinian population of the province is determined to be between 40 to 60 percent Palestinian. This would later be a major security factor in AFOSI Detachment 7308's support to the 33 TFW during both Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

On evening of 13 September, 1990, the first elements of the 33 TFW arrived at Tabuk, Saudi Arabia on three KC-10 aircraft, from Eglin Air Force Base (EAFB), Florida. This advance element consisted of approximately 65 personnel. Of the 65 arriving personnel, 13 were Air Force security policemen commanded by Captain Charles H. Taylor. The deployed security policemen were attached to the 33 TFW, from the 3201st Security Police Squadron, EAFB, Florida. (2:5). Although, this represented the first element of the 33 TFW to arrive at Tabuk, Saudi Arabia, Captain Taylor was met by an AFOSI Officer Special Agent (Captain) who served as the Commander, AFOSI Detachment 7308, and an Enlisted Special Agent (MSgt), who served as the NCOIC. Both had arrived to Tabuk from Riyadh, Saudi Arabia on the morning of 23 September, 1990.

The first responsibility of the deployed AFOSI agents was to establish communications with AFOSI Region 73, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. This was followed by locating secure work space and lodging for themselves and two additional AFOSI personnel scheduled to arrive within days. They were finally charged to began development and implementation of a tactical counterintelligence collections plan (TCICP). The establishment and implementation of the TCICP, included liaison with Saudi military and civil police and Saudi internal security services. This was augmented by the establishment of a local source network and a combination of the two served as keys to the safety and security of Air Force personnel who would support air operations from Tabuk, Saudi Arabia.

The second element of the AFOSI mission was the conduct and reporting of a comprehensive Air Base Survivability Assessment (ABSA) for the deployed fighter wing. Elements of the ABSA included not only assessments of traditional threats, but also included

possible terrorist threats or operational elements in the area; threats to water supplies, food supplies, fuels, housing, recreation, aircraft and support maintenance elements, munitions systems and storage facilities, aircraft, aircrew, and Air Force command elements. In support of these objectives, the NCOIC recommended the establishment of the detachment office on King Faisal Air Base, in conjunction with the deployed Security Police element. It was suggested the detachment office be located within a “security compound” surrounded by concertina wire, and a system of entry control points. The detachment commander strongly resisted these recommendations, in favor of running detachment operations from a local hotel. The hotel operation continued for two weeks when the Detachment Commander was ordered to relocate to the base by the deployed Wing Commander at Tabuk, and finally the AFOSI Region Commander, at Riyadh. With the relocation of detachment operations from the local hotel to King Faisal Air Base, and the arrival of an additional enlisted Special Agent (TSgt) and Administrative Support Specialist (SSgt), the Detachment Commander began to exhibit a number of examples of irrational behavior. These included violent outbursts of anger, extreme anxiety, and periods of deep depression. After the first two weeks at the deployed location, the Detachment Commander became increasingly unstable. Violent outbursts became more frequent and unpredictable. This led to confrontations between the Detachment Commander and the NCOIC who attempted to act as a buffer between the Commander and the other detachment enlisted personnel. The Detachment Commander’s behavior eventually led to the Detachment Commander’s personal weapon being secured by the NCOIC. Following consultations between the Wing Commander, the AFOSI Region Commander, and the NCOIC, the Detachment Commander was relieved of his command, and returned to Riyadh for medical evaluation. The

NCOIC was appointed SAC by the AFOSI Region Commander at this time, and retained the position for the remaining 8 months of the deployment and return of the fighter wing to the United States.

The primary threat to Air Force deployed units at Tabuk, Saudi Arabia, before the beginning of the war, was determined to most probably be from elements of the indigenous Palestinian population. It was felt these people could be sympathetic to either traditional Palestinian causes or to the Iraqi President. Based on this perceived threat, initial collections were focused in the area of anti-terrorism countermeasures. Implementation of the TCICP and ABSA determined the location of a building housing an element of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) within the city of Tabuk. (2:6) The PLO facility was located adjacent to the market square used by most deployed US and British Air Force personnel. The second area of concern was the existence of Palestinian refugee relocation camp located just outside the base perimeter fence. Liaison with local Saudi police and internal security services resulted in no incidents of confrontation between the deployed personnel and the local Palestinian population. However, a possible threat was discovered and reported to Saudi security services. The threat originated from a Palestinian national, holding a Jordanian Passport. (2:6) Palestinians commonly hold professional positions throughout the Middle East, and are believed to be among the most educated people in the region. The Palestinian national, identified as possibly posing a threat, served as the only dentist on base. He was arrested, interrogated by Saudi security representatives, and later deported as "posing a threat to the security of the Kingdom." On at least two additional occasions, AFOSI countersurveillance of deployed 33 TFW personnel, in the Tabuk market area, disclosed possible surveillance by persons identified by Saudi security

services as holding Jordanian identification documents. Before Air Force personnel departed the base, each group received defensive counterintelligence and anti-terrorism briefings from AFOSI. Because there were only two AFOSI Special Agents on base, countersurveillance and anti-terrorism activities, normally performed by AFOSI alone, were augmented by Air Force security police. Working in concert with Wing Commander, Air Force security police, Air Force transportation specialists, and Saudi security services, a series of route surveys were conducted, and a number of routes were selected for off-base trips to the local market. Using a series of color codes representing routes, each off-base bus trip traveled by a separate route. The color coded routes, relayed to Air Force security police, Air Force transportation specialists, and Saudi security services by AFOSI, greatly reduced the probability of terrorist ambush or attack of deployed personnel.

In support of Air Force deployed personnel morale, AFOSI also conducted a vulnerability assessment, route survey, and site survey of the Red Sea port city of Duba, Saudi Arabia. (3.1) The completed written survey and assessment enabled the deployed Wing Commander to determine, through risk analysis, all liabilities which would be associated with such a trip. The written report greatly contributed to the security and safety of deployed Air Force personnel traveling to and visiting Duba for morale and recreation.

The primary mission of AFOSI during the period of support to the 33 TFW was the conduct of tactical counterintelligence collections and anti-terrorism support. AFOSI provided only "reactive" criminal investigative support to deployed commanders. With the exception of a few incidents of drinking or gambling (both violations of General Order 1), there were very few problems with the deployed personnel. However, the one exception resulted in the first general

courts-martial in the theater during the war. Based on a joint narcotics investigation between AFOSI and security police investigators, an Air Force Staff Sergeant was convicted under General Court-Martial Order No. 1, on 10 February 1991. (4:1) While deployed as a life support specialist, the Staff Sergeant stole all the injectable morphine and a number of other narcotics from the deployed flight surgeon. Approximately half of the 120 doses of morphine were recovered by AFOSI and security police investigators, with the other half having been used by the Staff Sergeant. In addition, a dose of LSD was discovered by AFOSI during a search of the Staff Sergeant's barracks room. This investigation was especially difficult because of the lack of specialized investigative tools, no crime scene processing or evidence collection materials, or specialized publications or forms used to collect and process evidence for laboratory analysis. As examples, blood was collected, chilled, and placed between two pieces of styrofoam for transportation from Tabuk, Saudi Arabia, to the US Army Criminal Investigative Laboratory (USACIL), in Frankfurt, Germany by courier flight (C-130 aircraft). Urine samples were collected, and sealed with duct tape (versus tamper proof evidence collection tape) for transportation to the USACIL, in Frankfurt, Germany. Laboratory requests and the final report of investigation were completed from memory because of the unavailability of forms or publications. The Staff Sergeant's sentence was adjudged on 11 January, 1991. He received a dishonorable discharge, confinement for 10 years, and reduction to the grade of airman basic. The key factors in the sentencing were the theft and use of the morphine (used to treat combat injuries); the introduction of LSD into the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; and the use of narcotics while receiving special pay.

Throughout the deployment, the cooperation between AFOSI, the wing intelligence function, and the security police element were outstanding. One area where this cooperation became very important was the protection of enlisted Special Agent rank. As with many foreign services, the Saudi military officers were very rank conscious. With each new introduction, Saudi officers would question the SAC about his rank. The typical response was, the Special Agent's ranks were "protected" and could not be disclosed. Even British counterparts voiced an interest in AFOSI Special Agent ranks, to include very specific questions about Special Agent ranks, not only at Tabuk, but also at the AFOSI District headquarters in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Saudi counterparts, in security and intelligence, believed all AFOSI Special Agents were either commissioned officers, or at worst, civilian Central Intelligence Agency representatives. This led to almost constant surveillance of AFOSI Special Agents by Saudi internal security services when they departed the base. Even US Air Force counterparts were questioned by Saudi and British officers about AFOSI ranks. In response, the deployed Wing Commander indicated the ranks were protected and could not be disclosed. The Wing Intelligence Officer (a Major) responded by stating he believed the SAC was a Major. On the other hand, the Chief of Security Police (a Captain) responded by stating he believed the SAC was a Captain.

The level of cooperation between the Wing Intelligence Officer, the Chief of Security Police, and the AFOSI SAC can be summed up in the final volume of the deployed units history: "LESSONS LEARNED: We overcame this by establishing an excellent rapport with the Wing Intelligence Personnel and the local AFOSI Detachment. We shared information which provided a secure environment for the deployed Wing's personnel and resources." (5:32)

During the conduct of both Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, no deployed 33 TFW personnel, or those attached to support units, were confronted with acts of violence by indigenous radical religious groups, supporters of terrorist organizations, or representatives of terrorism organizations. I think it can be argued that one of the keys to the successful 33 TFW air operations, and the return of all deployed personnel was the SAC's belief that he "was personally responsible for the safety of everyone there."

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